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Market Served: Wausau-Stevens Point

Call Letters: WSAU

Date: Oct 27

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Comments regarding MB Docket No. 04-233

Local News

- *Provide details on your stations investment in local news.* WSAU has made a considerable and growing investment in local news. With our power upgrade we have hired a new full-time News Director and have hired an additional part-time reporter to specifically cover communities that now fall within our new, larger coverage area. In the next two months we will add three additional newscasts on weekday afternoons. WSAU's newsroom has also provided expanded news coverage for other stations within our market, adding morning news coverage to WDEZ-FM and WRIG-AM.
- *How many local newscasts are aired per week?* 250
- *Do you allow on-air time for breaking news and local emergency information? Yes Give examples.* WSAU regularly reempts regular programming for breaking news coverage--the latest examples are the

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Wausara County plane crash on 10/21, and expanded evening weather coverage on 6/27.

- *Give examples of how your website is used to enhance local news coverage.* WSAU invests tremendous manpower into maintaining local news content on our website. Local news stories are regularly updated throughout the day--including exclusive content that is often more detailed information beyond what's included in our regular newscasts. We often post developing stories on our web site in advance of that hour or half-hour's regularly scheduled newscast.

Local Public Affairs

- *Describe all daily or weekly programs devoted to local public affairs, local politics, community activities, and similar issues including the length of such programs.* WSAU's '55 Feedback' (M-F 9a-10:30a) is Central Wisconsin's premiere local interview and call-in program, and has devoted tremendous amounts of time to the local political races over the last six months. We've also provided extensive coverage of the smoking ban resolution in the Wausau area through several call-in and interview segments. Wisconsin Weekend (Sat 2:30-3pm) includes two weekly public affairs interviews, focusing on issues specific to Central Wisconsin.
- *Are there regularly scheduled segments on local public affairs included in your local newscasts? yes Give examples.* '55 Feedback' interviews are regularly repackaged and rebroadcast as part of WSAU's regular newscasts. 'Wisconsin Weekend' segments are often previewed in regularly-scheduled newscasts on Fridays in advance of broadcast on Saturday.

Creating or Selecting Programming

- *Describe your stations efforts and practices for determining the types of programming you air. For example, do you have an open door policy, accept and review e-mailed suggestions, conduct polls of your local audience, perform auditorium tests of various programming?* All listener comments about programming and programming suggestions are personally reviewed by the Program Director and kept on file. It is the policy of the new Program Director, Chris Conley, to personally take and return all listener calls concerning any broadcast material on WSAU
- *Preemptions: Provide any examples when your station preempted network programming in order to air other programming of more interest to your local community, such as local political debates or local sporting events.* Our station regularly preempts regular network

programming in favor of local content, particularly during the high school sports season. In addition to regular Friday night broadcasts, WSAU preempted regular weeknight programming three times last summer for high school baseball coverage, and last Tuesday 10/26 for a high school football playoff game.

Emergency Programming

- *Describe any live and/or on-the-scene coverage of emergencies, weather, traffic, crime and similar events, including any positive impact of your coverage on the local community.* WSAU's coverage of emergency weather situations sets the standard that all other radio stations in our market are judged by. We regularly preempt regular programming for live coverage of severe weather warnings. WSAU's coverage is often carried on other Midwest Communications stations that serve Central Wisconsin. We provided evening and late night coverage of tornados in Adams and Wood Counties in June '04, and covered three other tornado watch/warning situations later in the summer.
- *Describe your stations weather forecasting service.* WSAU invests heavily in local weather coverage, through a private weather service. All of our studios are equipt with tv and computer access to doppler radar and regional forecast and weather data.
- *Do your stations participate in AMBER or EAS?* YES

Political Programming

- *Describe all candidate debates sponsored or aired.* WSAU has hosted a two candidates debates in the last year, involving the Wausau mayoral candidates in April, and the 85th State Assembly candidates in October. WSAU news has covered and participated in debates in the following races: U.S. Senate, 86th State Assembly and 17th State Senate.
- *Do your stations offer candidates other types of free airtime? Give examples, and include examples of candidates declining offers of free airtime.* WSAU regularly covers candidates rallies and position statements as part of our local news coverage.
- *Are local political issues discussed, or candidates interviewed, during newscasts or public affairs programming on a regular basis?* Yes. WSAU's coverage of candidates is frequently cited as the best by the candidates themselves.

- *Do your stations cover local campaign and /or convention events?* Yes
- *Describe your stations participation in promoting voter registration drives.* WSAU has provided extensive news coverage of local voting issues, including two specific problems involving absentee ballot use in Central Wisconsin. In Wausau several absentee ballots were inadvertently sent out without return addresses--WSAU provided information to voters about making the necessary changes to safeguard their votes. WSAU has also provided extensive news coverage of districts with 'overweight' absentee ballots--where votes may not have been counted unless voters added extra postage.
- *Give examples of how your websites are used to enhance political coverage.* The above mentioned stories and ballot instructions were posted on WSAU's web site--and WSAU is investing substantial manpower in redesigning our web site for election day to provide real-time election results.

Civic, Cultural and Other Community-Responsive Programming

- *Please list examples of programming targeted to raise funds for local charity organizations.* WSAU is planning a charity toy drive with the Salvation Army this Christmas, involving 'The World's Largest Christmas Stocking.' We believe this may be the largest toy drive in Central Wisconsin history.
- *Describe any coverage of local events, such as local sports, fairs, holiday events, local theater, and fire or police outreach events.* WSAU news has provided extended coverage of the local Performing Arts Center and Wausau Community Theater seasons; we broadcast live from the Wisconsin Valley Fair and provide coverage of the fair through our regular newscasts and public affairs programs.
- *Please list the number of Public Service Announcements aired per week.*
75
- *Please list examples of your Public Service outreach in the community.* WSAU has just completed coverage of "kidsvote", a local civics program that uses Election Day as part of the elementary school curriculum.
- *Please list your stations coverage of important issues affecting the local community, such as consumer rip-off's, smoking and other health hazards, safety, drinking and driving, domestic abuse and similar issues.* Consumer and fraud alerts are regularly covered in WSAU's newscasts and programming. In the last two months we've covered 'action alerts' on fraudulent drug programs from Canada, internet sites that collect personal information and passwords, social security scams, and home improvement rip-offs.

Station Participation in Community Activities

- *Give examples of your stations support and involvement with non-profit and charity initiatives.* WSAU just completed coverage of the first induction ceremonies of the Central Wisconsin Music Hall of Fame. Our Christmas charity effort involves partnerships with the Salvation Army. Our station has also provided coverage of hurricane relief efforts in Wisconsin for victims in Florida, and extended details on applying for federal disaster aid from springtime tornados and flooding in Wisconsin.
- *Provide examples of how your stations promote causes not tied to a particular organization, such as health screenings, free vaccinations, nutritional advice, community fundraisers, blood drives, disaster relief efforts, etc.* WSAU ran news and public affairs coverage of community health screenings at the Bridge Community Healthcenter; coverage of health warnings about hepatitis from the Marathon County Health Department; coverage of flu shot shortages and guidelines from the state health department.